

## **Spies in the Laundry:**

### **The Fate of the Chinese Population in Soviet Russia in the Great Terror (1936-38)**

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“The Chinese ran across the road with huge rye loaves in their hands. They were dressed in blue, like women in trousers. Their bare heads ended in knots on the nape, and looked as if they were made of twisted-up handkerchiefs. Some of them stopped to watch, and Zhenia could look at those properly. Their faces were pale, earthen, grinning. They were sun-tanned and dirty, like brass oxidised by poverty.” (Boris Pasternak, *Zhenia's Childhood* (1919), describing a street scene in Yekaterinburg in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>1</sup>

On September 10, 1938, forty-two Chinese laundry workers (and fourteen other Chinese) were shot by the secret police in Moscow. Almost all of them were accused of espionage, mostly for Japan. On February 26, 1938, nine other Chinese had been shot in the Siberian city of Tomsk for allegedly being members of a counterrevolutionary espionage organization. And in the Russian Far East (RFE), with its substantial Asian population, hundreds of Chinese were shot or sent to the GuLag, most of them convicted on the basis of §58-6 of the criminal code, which was related to espionage. This article examines the fate of the Chinese population in Soviet Russia during the Great Terror (1936-1938), when thousands were executed or deported, and after which there ceased to be any substantial Chinese presence on Soviet territory. The Chinese nationals who fell victim to the Terror were among hundreds of thousands of labor migrants who came to Russia as part of the huge labor migration from China to Europe during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After a critique of the scholarly literature, there will be a brief introduction to the development and main characteristics of Soviet nationalities policy. An understanding of the Bolsheviks' concept of nationality and their thinking in ethnic stereotypes is essential in approaching the overarching question of the perpetrators' motivations. It is also the point where, as I argue further below, the Chinese experienced a similar fate as other Soviet or

diaspora nationalities, despite their differences in many other ways. Ethnicity was the decisive criterion and superseded class, citizenship, or any other category. Following a brief historical overview of Chinese migration to Russia, I will provide an outline of the events of the Great Terror and then illuminate how it affected Chinese nationals on Soviet territory. The article also touches on the issue of citizenship in the context of the fate of the Chinese.

The geographical foci of this study are Moscow, Tomsk, and the RFE. This selection is source-based. I am using materials from the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF)<sup>2</sup>, recently published documents from the secret police (NKVD) archives<sup>3</sup>, recently published archival documents on the legislation pertaining to the Terror and the Chinese in the Soviet Far East,<sup>4</sup> as well as shooting and victim lists published by Memorial.<sup>5</sup> To my knowledge, this is the first systematic study of Chinese nationals in the Soviet Union and their persecution during the Great Terror. The focus of this article is ordinary Chinese migrant workers who came to Russia/ the Soviet Union for economic reasons, and not as part of the Communist movement. Although the Terror also affected political émigrés, they are not a major concern in this article and have been discussed elsewhere.<sup>6</sup>

In the history of the Chinese Diaspora Russia and the Soviet Union as destinations occupy a special place. The Chinese presence in Russia is usually omitted from historical and cultural studies of the Chinese Diaspora,<sup>7</sup> which focus instead on the larger and permanent Chinese communities in Southeast Asia and North America.<sup>8</sup> The Chinese presence in Russia was only temporary and “labor migration left behind few diasporic links and tended to be primarily a form of relocation.”<sup>9</sup> Saveliev points out that the unique feature of the Chinese diaspora in Russia is “that it has never had a naturalized Chinese community as a core, strong enough to struggle for legal equality with Russians.”<sup>10</sup> It is therefore controversial to even speak of a community, and I use the term “presence” in this article. It is similarly problematic to speak of the Chinese under consideration here as a *Soviet* nationality the way Martin does.<sup>11</sup> Although physically present on Soviet territory, very few were Soviet subjects; in fact,

less than 8 percent were Soviet citizens. The Chinese were much less likely to have Soviet citizenship than other nationalities, such as Koreans, Finns, or Poles.

Much of the literature is limited to the RFE and late imperial times.<sup>12</sup> Some studies speak of Asians in general, and do not analytically differentiate between Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese.<sup>13</sup> Others deal mainly with the Russian perception of the Chinese presence in Russia.<sup>14</sup> Another source is concerned with recruitment and working conditions of Chinese migrants in Russia and their implications for diplomatic relations between China and Russia.<sup>15</sup> Petrov's history of Chinese in Russia is the most comprehensive study on the subject to date, yet unfortunately his account ends in 1917.<sup>16</sup> Shkurkin, in his study of the Chinese in the Russian Far Eastern labor market, completely omits the period from 1917 to 1990. He only provides data on Chinese laborers during the big waves of labor migration during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and then again after the downfall of the Soviet Union.<sup>17</sup> Larin's *Kitaitsy v Rossii* is the most comprehensive chronology of Chinese migration to the early Soviet Union. However, the only information on the 1930s concerns those prosecuted in the Comintern schools.<sup>18</sup>

The Chinese are not mentioned in the standard works on the persecution, deportation, and the terror of the 1930s.<sup>19</sup> The authors restrict themselves to broad generalizations, like Saveliev, who writes that "Chinese communities were destroyed suddenly in the wave of Stalin's reprisals in the mid-1930s."<sup>20</sup> All Lukin writes about the terror is that "the Soviet Chinese population continued to decrease gradually until 1938, when the remaining Chinese were either deported to China or sent to Stalin's labor camps and vanished there."<sup>21</sup> Bugai only mentions Koreans when talking about persecutions in the RFE,<sup>22</sup> the same is true for Martin.<sup>23</sup> The Chinese have not been the main subject of a single study on the Terror. Larin laments that we know almost nothing about the fate of Chinese on Soviet territory after 1937 and states simply that many of them, including the Chinese former Red Army soldiers, returned to China at various times.<sup>24</sup> Stephan provides a six-line paragraph on the Chinese

when talking about the “expulsion of East Asians” during the 1930s. It says that 19,000 of 24,589 Chinese were picked up between December 1937 and May 1938 and that the Chinese made up less than 1 percent of the region’s inhabitants by 1939, while they, as an ethnic group, had lived there for over a thousand years.<sup>25</sup> There are also no traces of the Chinese in the major works on the GuLag system,<sup>26</sup> although an analysis of the Memorial data sets, as well as certain memoirs,<sup>27</sup> tell us that Chinese have been convicted to GuLag terms in large numbers, and GuLag survivors report that even in the camps the Chinese were in charge of the laundry.<sup>28</sup> This paper aims to help fill this gap by providing recently available sources on the Chinese experience of the Great Terror in various parts of the Soviet Union.

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### *Soviet Nationality Policy*

Why did they do it? What was the concept behind the Bolsheviks’ understanding of nationality and their merciless persecution of people along ethnic categories? This section outlines, in a cursory way, the evolution of the Bolsheviks’ approach to the national question and helps establish a framework for analyzing the persecution of national minorities like the Chinese during the Terror.

Before 1917 the Bolsheviks had called for national self-determination for all peoples and condemned any form of colonization. Yet with their ascendance to power they realized that the new Soviet state would not be able to survive without the resources from non-Russian areas of the former Tsarist Empire. Furthermore, the Bolsheviks realized that the non-Russian nationalities on the periphery played a decisive role for the outcome of the Civil War (1918-1921) and the consolidation of their power. Victory was achieved in part due to the promise of national self-determination to the tribes and nations on the periphery, and the Whites were ultimately defeated with the help of the non-Russian peoples.<sup>29</sup> Thus, the new regime was faced with the task of reconciling an anti-imperialist position with a quasi-colonization of territories, which had belonged to Tsarist Russia. In their attempt to do so, “the Bolsheviks

integrated the national idea into the administrative-territorial structure of the new Soviet Union.”<sup>30</sup>

The development of the Bolsheviks’ strategies in dealing with nationalities was shaped by Marxist-Leninist ideology and the belief in Marxist historical and material determinism.<sup>31</sup> In official rhetoric, the colonization of these peoples by the Bolsheviks resulted in a development of their productive forces, not in imperialist exploitation. They tried to speed up the presumably predetermined course of history by working simultaneously on the economic base, social forms, and cultural expressions. The construction of nationalities from clans and tribes (both considered social forms from the feudal age) is regarded as part of the Soviet project of accelerating historical developments. Such a process was deemed a necessary prerequisite for the transition to capitalism and had taken place in Europe during the Industrial Revolution. The creation of nationalities was followed by the delineation of national territories and the imposition of official language and culture. The Bolsheviks were concerned with ideologically justifying their approach and its counter position to traditional imperialism. The official word was that instead of exploiting the nationalities on the fringes of the empire, they were assisting them and helped them escaping exploitation.<sup>32</sup>

Yet the seemingly benevolent approach to nationalities was frequently paired with violence and terror. The new regime attacked tradition and religion, destroyed local communities, and relentlessly persecuted any (perceived) display of what it called “bourgeois nationalism,”<sup>33</sup> and gradually ethnicity and nationality as categories became more important than the category of class. In the 1930s, the time period of this article’s focus, diaspora nationalities, especially those with a homeland outside of Soviet borders, became the target of repressions. Faced with the threat of “imperialist encirclement,”<sup>34</sup> the Soviet regime drew a sharp distinction between Soviet and foreign nationalities and deported and killed people based on their ethnic background. In the tense internal and external political climate which accompanied the Great Purges,<sup>35</sup> it became a central question for the Soviet authorities

whether national minorities on Soviet territory, who had a homeland, could be “true Soviet citizens,” i.e. unconditionally loyal to the Soviet state, especially in the event of foreign intervention. As we shall see below, citizenship did not matter. It was ethnicity and the perpetrators’ thinking in ethnic stereotypes which made diaspora nationalities like the Chinese the target of imprisonment, deportation, and execution. Ultimately, this thinking in ethnic categories, which had evolved in the process of the consolidation of Soviet power, facilitated terror along ethnic lines.

### *The Chinese in Russia and the early Soviet Union – an Overview*

The history of Chinese migration to Russian territory dates back to 1860, when “Russia absorbed the Priamur and the Primorye by a combination of encroachment, diplomacy, and luck.”<sup>36</sup> More than 200,000 Chinese entered the RFE in the 30 years following the 1878 loosening of Manchu restrictions on Han-Chinese access to Manchuria.<sup>37</sup> The expansion of the gold industry and the construction of the Transsiberian Railway would have been impossible without Chinese laborers. Chinese peasants were the main suppliers of food for the growing urban population and usually achieved much higher productivity than their Russian settler counterparts.<sup>38</sup> By 1900, every city between Khabarovsk and Vladivostok had its own “Chinatown.”<sup>39</sup> Chinese laborers were “the only source of manpower available in the region until the migration of Russian peasants swelled significantly between 1900 and 1914.”<sup>40</sup> The outbreak of World War I and military mobilization caused another severe labor shortage, and Russia needed even more Chinese labor, this time extending to the factories and the construction industry in European Russia.<sup>41</sup> During the war, Russian enterprises hired more than 100,000 Chinese migrant workers.<sup>42</sup> According to the Union of Chinese Citizens, 80,000 Chinese came to Russia between 1915 and 1917 to work on the Murmansk Railway (10,000 Chinese), in Petrograd’s industry (5,000 Chinese), and elsewhere.<sup>43</sup>

The first governmental backlash against Chinese immigration was launched as early as 1884, when it was decreed that all Chinese living more than 50 verst within Russian territory would be expelled.<sup>44</sup> Hatred and violence against the Chinese population reached its peak during the xenophobic boxer rebellion in China in 1900 and the subsequent Russo-Chinese War.<sup>45</sup> Brutal massacres occurred, such as the one in Blagoveshchensk, where 3,500 Chinese were murdered.<sup>46</sup> Many more were terrorized and driven out of the cities by mobs, supported by the Russian authorities.<sup>47</sup> In 1908, the Duma passed a law that forbade the employment of Chinese and Koreans in public construction, including the railways, but the industries ignored it.<sup>48</sup> 50,000 Chinese worked within the front zones during the war, while other Chinese, especially those without permanent employment, were suspected of espionage and deported during World War I.<sup>49</sup>

After the October Revolution, many Chinese workers who had remained in Soviet Russia participated in the Civil War (1918-1921).<sup>50</sup> About 8,000 Chinese lived in Moscow in the 1920s. Most of them worked as laundry workers, tailors, or bakers.<sup>51</sup> Although they were also a target of Bolshevik propaganda, literacy campaigns, and cultural education efforts, the Chinese figured marginally in comparison to the attention devoted to other nationalities in Moscow during that time. There are no other traces of the Chinese in European Russia in the archive holdings of the Nationalities Department.<sup>52</sup> However, the Chinese received considerably more attention in the Far Eastern territory, where many more of them lived.<sup>53</sup>

According to the 1926 census, 100,000 Chinese nationals had remained in the Soviet Union after the Civil War. 10,000 of those lived in the European part of Russia, including 8,000 in Moscow.<sup>54</sup> In 1926, there were 77,000 Chinese, along with 169,000 Koreans and 1,000 Japanese, in the Far Eastern Region (*krai*) alone.<sup>55</sup> It should be emphasized that in the Far East there was a lively cross-border movement of goods and people. Impoverished Chinese laborers continued to seek work here throughout the 1920s and early 1930s. A vivid testimony of the situation can be found in Lena Jin-Savva's account of her father's first

adventure to the Soviet Union in the fall of 1931. In the hope of receiving a free education, he and a friend crossed the Amur at night, only to be picked up by Soviet border guards shortly thereafter and taken to a temporary prison that was full of Chinese, who had come to Soviet territory in the hope of finding work. They were then taken to a real prison, which was also almost exclusively filled with Chinese. After 2-3 months in the Soviet prison, Red Army soldiers brought them back to the other side of the Amur.<sup>56</sup> Such adventures appear to have been the rule, judging from the substantial Chinese prison population. However, other sources say that illegal immigrants were usually not deported, even though “immigration was feared as an easy cover for foreign espionage.”<sup>57</sup> Instead they were often moved away from sensitive border regions, which was especially the case in the RFE. However, “Anti-Korean and anti-Chinese popular violence increased dramatically from 1928 to 1932,” which led to a mass exodus of Chinese migrant labor.<sup>58</sup> A large part of the remainder would fall victim to the terror of the mid-1930s. It is unknown how many Chinese lived on Soviet territory during the 1930s, especially since many Chinese were seasonal workers and worked in the Soviet Union only temporarily.<sup>59</sup>

### *The Great Terror and Mass Operations*

What became known as the Great Terror or the Great Purges was actually a series of separate events. These can be categorized into five types of persecutions: 1) party membership screenings, 2) round-ups of former oppositionists from 1935 to 1939, 3) the three famous show trials, and 4) waves of NKVD arrests of people who were suspected of something or who had been denounced. A fifth part of the Terror, and the one which has only become known since the 1990s, were the so-called “mass operations,” which hit everybody. All in all, around two million arrests were made during that period. Of those, around 700,000 were executed and the rest was mostly sent to camps (GuLag). Of the 700,000 executed, only approximately 40,000 were tried and sentenced by the Military Council of the High Court

(*Voennaia Kollegia Verkhovnogo Suda*). The other 660,000 executions were part of the mass operations. There were two procedures involved: 1) a legal procedure where there was a court involved with a judge and prosecutor, i.e. where the standard legal system was at work, and 2) the extra-legal procedure (*vnesudebny*) in which there was no court involved and people were sentenced by troikas, by the album procedure, or the police. This extra-legal procedure was based on the law of 1 December 1934 (the so-called “Kirov Law”) which stipulated that in the event of terrorism, offenders can be arrested, sentenced, and shot, all within 24 hours. This law contradicted the legal code as there was no option of appeal. It may be worth pointing out that all this was legal within the Soviet framework. Everything went by specified procedure, there were stamps and signatures, a paper trail, and the state prosecutor involved in the process.

The mass operations included two major operations, which started roughly at the same time. One was the so-called Kulak Operation (NKVD order no. 00447 of 30 July 1937) which was directed against escaped kulaks, criminals, and anti-Soviet elements. The second part of the mass operations was the so-called “national operations,” the category under which the Chinese victims fell. The German and the Polish orders (NKVD order no. 00439 of 25 July 1937 and no. 00485 of 11 August 1937 respectively) set the pattern for all other national operations.<sup>60</sup> A total of 335,513 people were convicted in the national operations between July 1937 and November 1938. The national operations accounted for 36.3 percent of the 681,692 executions in 1937/1938. They made up a fifth of the total arrests and a third of the total executions. “Of those arrested in the national operations, 73.7 percent were executed,” and “arrest in the national operations was much more likely to result in execution” than arrest in other operations.<sup>61</sup>

So far, no NKVD order specifically targeting only Chinese has been found. However, there were a number of orders which targeted foreigners and refugees, and these might have served as the legal basis for the persecution of the Chinese. NKVD order no. 00693 of 23

October 1937, stipulated that any refugee from any country who had entered the USSR, regardless of motive and circumstances of entry, can be arrested, convicted, and sentenced for espionage,<sup>62</sup> which was what eventually happened to almost all of the persecuted Chinese. NKVD order no. 52660 of 17 December 1937 was a nation-wide order to arrest any foreigner who does not have Soviet citizenship and cannot document his identity (i.e. has no passport). In this order, the Chinese are explicitly mentioned, along with Iranians, Greeks, Italians, Afghans, Turks, and others. In this order, Ezhov requested the local NKVD authorities to determine the number of these people by nationality, the districts where they concentrate in the respective territories, and where and in which professions they work.<sup>63</sup> Subsequently, a January 31, 1938 resolution of the Party Politburo to Ezhov authorized the NKVD to continue the operation against espionage and diversionary contingents of Poles, Latvians, Germans, Estonians, Finns, Greeks, Iranians, *Kharbinsy*, Chinese, and Romanians until 15 April 1938, regardless of their citizenship.<sup>64</sup> Following this Politburo resolution, there was a nation-wide NKVD Order No. 233 on 1 February 1938 to continue all the previous orders (00485 (Poles), 00593 (Kharbinsy), 49990 (Latvians), 50215 (Greeks), 202 (Iranians) until 1 April 1938. In addition, this order no. 233 authorizes the arrest of those nationalities specified in the Politburo resolution of the previous day, which included the Chinese.

Although the category of *Kharbinsy* meant primarily ethnic Russians who worked on the China Eastern Railway,<sup>65</sup> a report from the Tula Oblast to Ezhov on 24 March 1938 about the progress of the operations concerning orders no. 00485, 00439, and 00593<sup>66</sup> states that 35 people have been arrested according to the “Chinese line” (*po kitaiskoi linii*).<sup>67</sup> The “Chinese line” is listed among that of nine other nationalities, which probably implies that Chinese were arrested as part of the orders applying to other nationalities, in this case, most likely under the *Kharbinsy* order. Thus, even if there was no specific Chinese order, this does not mean that Chinese were not subjected to other orders. In fact, it was rather common to arrest various nationalities under an order which, by its name, targeted only one nationality.<sup>68</sup>

There were a few other, more specific orders regarding the Chinese in the RFE, which will be treated in the paragraph below on events in the Far East, as well as an incident where the Chinese embassy intervened. This incident happened shortly before the end of the mass operations on 17 November 1938.<sup>69</sup> On 4 November 1938, Ezhov and Beria sent a special notice to Stalin concerning an early release of Chinese citizens from Soviet prisons. It informs Stalin that the Chinese embassy in Moscow had petitioned the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for an early release of Chinese national *with Chinese citizenship* who had been convicted for various-length prison terms on the basis of minor infractions of the law. According to the data provided by the embassy, there were around 400 of these cases across the USSR. The note further says that in spring [1938], it had been conceded to the Chinese embassy, that persons of the above category would be freed and sent to Xinjiang. This agreement had been part of the resolution of the problem of the eviction of Chinese nationals from the RFE to Xinjiang. Ezhov and Beria inform Stalin that they think it expedient to free and deport from USSR territory to Xinjiang those Chinese who had been convicted for speculation, smuggling, currency operations, opium smoking, sale of narcotic substances, domestic crimes, and anti-Soviet agitation. These persons were to be deported to Xinjiang using a simplified documentation procedure for their exit. Stalin is asked for directions in this matter.<sup>70</sup> On 10 November 1938, the politburo approved of this plan.<sup>71</sup>

### *Repression of Chinese in Moscow*

Eleven Chinese victims are included in the shooting lists of the “Kommunarka” execution site in Moscow.<sup>72</sup> These were all Chinese of higher rank or of political importance, and were tried by a military tribunal (*voennaia kollegia*), i.e. these victims received something resembling a trial. They were all shot between February and August 1938. Yet there were many more victims among the 8,000 ordinary Chinese of Moscow. Eighty-nine are listed in the shooting lists of “Butovskii Poligon,” the place near Moscow where the executions took

place.<sup>73</sup> Seventy-three of the eighty-nine listed were arrested in February and March 1938. Only nine were arrested before February 1938 and only four were arrested after March 1938. The single most frequent day of execution was 10 September 1938. This fact can be explained by the album procedure, according to which thousands of people listed in the albums would be sentenced on one day. All those shot on 10 September 1938 were sentenced on 2 September 1938.

Among the eighty-nine shot there were fifty laundry workers, forty-two of which were shot on 10 September 1938. The other Moscow Chinese worked in all kinds of jobs: they were factory workers, cooks, street cleaners; one even was a movie actor. Five of the eighty-nine shot were working as assistants, typesetters, or copy editor for the Comintern -sponsored publishing house “International Worker”(*Inostranny Rabotchi*). According to a special notice from Ezhov to Stalin from 29 April 1938, this publishing house was thought to harbor a group of Chinese, who were known as participants in the Trotskyist opposition and suspected of espionage.<sup>74</sup> Fifty-six of the eighty-nine shot were from Shandong, five from Hebei, four from Shenyang, and the remainder from Anhui, Beijing, Guangdong, Harbin, Jiangsu, Tianjin, and Zhejiang. This data confirms Shandong’s significance as a labor recruitment center. Impoverished Shandong, where once the infamous xenophobic boxer movement had emerged,<sup>75</sup> not only provided most of the Chinese migrants to Russia. 62,000 laborers for the South African gold mines and 140,000 laborers for France to build roads and dig trenches during World War I were also recruited in the northern provinces of Shandong and Zhili.<sup>76</sup> Almost all members of the Moscow sample came from a peasant background, with very few coming from either working class or bourgeois backgrounds. Four of the eighty-nine executed Chinese were party members of the Soviet Communist Party. These were Zhen Dezhan, an electrician, originally from Beijing, Li Sanjing, a photographer originally from Port Arthur, Yan Manchun, a laundry worker, and Dang Guiyuan (who went by the Russian name of Rebrov Nestor Mikhailovich), a laundry worker who had been a member of the French

Communist Party from 1925 to 1928 (and probably a participant of the work-study-movement to France in the early 1920s) and a Soviet Communist Party member from 1928 to 1932. Two from the list were members of the Chinese Communist Party. These were Ye Qiu, a female assistant editor originally from Hunan, and Ho Dengzhi, a copy editor at “International Worker.” None of the Moscow Chinese victims had Soviet citizenship; they were either Chinese citizens (27) or stateless (73).

#### *An Example from Tomsk*

Yuan Sun-Yun was born in 1900 in the village of Wugan, Shandong Province in China as the son of an admiral in the Chinese imperial navy. Yuan graduated from middle school in 1917 with a command in English and Russian and spent three years in England working for a Chinese businessman. He returned to China in 1922 and went to the Soviet Union in 1924. Yuan was one of the hundreds of thousands of Chinese who entered the Soviet Union as migrant workers. On 26 February 1938, he and eight other Chinese were shot in Tomsk, allegedly for being members of a counterrevolutionary espionage organization.

Recently published documents from the FSB archive in Tomsk allow us to piece together the whole process from the arrest of the suspects to their execution.<sup>77</sup> First there is the request from the local NKVD on 9 February 1938 to arrest a group of residents of the city of Kolpashevo who are suspected of belonging to a counterrevolutionary Chinese espionage diversionary organization. The list of names of people to be arrested comprises 15 people, including eight Chinese, three Russians, and four Koreans.<sup>78</sup> The next document we have is the transcript of Yuan Sun-Yun’s interrogation. His name was not among those on the initial arrest list, but he is the alleged ringleader of the Chinese espionage organization. In the document detailing his interrogation we learn that Yuan had been expelled from the Chinese Communist Party, of which he had been a member from 1918<sup>79</sup> to 1924, in connection with illegal border crossings from China into the USSR. In 1929, i.e. after five years in the USSR,

he had been sentenced by a NKVD troika in the Far Eastern Territory and served three years in a Soviet prison. Arrested again in early 1938 and accused of heading the Chinese espionage organization, he confessed to the charges brought against him and was executed. Excerpts from his interrogation read as follows:<sup>80</sup>

Q: Are you guilty of being the leader of an espionage diversionary organization, which you formed from turncoats, both Chinese and Russian, who were banished to Narym.

Do you consider yourself guilty in this matter?

A: Yes, I do.

Q: Name the participants of the counterrevolutionary organization you formed.

A: The participants of the counterrevolutionary organization I formed are: [mentions 12 names], all above-mentioned Chinese are turncoats, the last four among them and Yu-Wen-Zi have been employees of the Chinese police in a city in Manchuria, in 1932 they were planted on USSR territory by Japanese espionage operatives with tasks similar to mine, such as espionage and diversion.

Q: How did you establish contact and commonality of counterrevolutionary activities with the above-mentioned agents of the Japanese espionage Mo-Zhe-Li, Fong-Yu and others?

A: To the majority of these persons, who had started the counterrevolutionary work with him, I was introduced by Yu-Wen-Zi. I directed an already established counterrevolutionary organization.

Q: Which tasks did your organization aim to accomplish?

A: Before my departure from China to the USSR I received from NAKASIMO the task of setting up diversionary groups along the railroad which, in case of a war with Japan, were to cause accidents and destroy important transport facilities and other objects of defensive significance. These same groups were to collect intelligence information of a military character. Deriving from these tasks, I also defined the task of our

organization in the event of a war against the USSR. We had wanted to fully represent a diversionary organization and to move with groups along the railroads in order to carry out this task. To avoid mistaking each other's identity, I divided the whole organization into five groups, at the top of which stood Yu Wenzi, Hui- Fu-Kuong, Kong Kongli, Can (Cai)-Kia-Qin, and Teng and assigned them to their own section of the railroad. [...]

Q: How did you want to conduct the diversion?

A: By way of taking out tracks and arson of crucial installations and buildings.

Q: You had contacts with Japanese espionage agents?

A: Yes, I had. In May 1937, I went by boat to Novosibirsk, went to the Japanese consulate, and personally met with the Consul, whom I informed in depth about the formation of a counterrevolutionary organization and its tasks. The consul listened, showed satisfaction about my activities, and suggested to me to continue the counterrevolutionary work and, in case of a war, to visit the consulate again. The consul did not give me specific advice or orders, but wrote into his notebook the names and addresses of all the Chinese participants of the organization I mentioned to him.

Q: Which counterrevolutionary work was conducted by your organization?

A: During the harvest campaign of 1937, the participants of our organization torched the bridge over the river Chai. In 1936 we torched the radar junction and building of the airfield in the settlement of Kolpashevo, destroying large areas of forest of timber for export, and committed a number of other acts which caused extensive damage to the state.

The interrogation is signed by Yuan and his interrogators. The above translation is the final version of the interrogation transcript, including the required confession. Usually there were a number of transcripts along the process, until the document included not only all the

information needed, but also a confession, in order to provide clear evidence and grounds for a conviction. We may assume that Yuan was tortured until he admitted to the charges and signed the confession.

The Chinese members of the Tomsk group ranged from 26 years to 59 years of age. Five were from Shandong province and four from Hebei province. Only one of them, Yuan Sun-Yun, the alleged ringleader, had Soviet citizenship, all others were stateless. Similarly, only the ringleader was said to have a higher education,<sup>81</sup> while all the others, with the exception of Yu Wenzi who had an unfinished middle school education, were specified as barely literate (*malogramotny*) or, in the case of two victims, as completely illiterate (*negramotny*). Seven of the nine Chinese were from peasant background and one from working class background. Only one, again the alleged ringleader, came from a bourgeois background. None of the convicted was a party member and they worked as shoemakers, as a cook, a small shopkeeper or had no permanent work. Only the alleged ringleader Yuan worked in a white-collar profession, as an accountant for the forest administration.<sup>82</sup> All Chinese of the Tomsk group were arrested and convicted in February 1938, following the January 31, 1938 Politburo resolution to authorize an NKVD operation against espionage and diversionary contingents of several nationalities, including Chinese (Order No. 233). All alleged participants in the counterrevolutionary organization, including four Koreans and a Russian illiterate peasant girl named Sergeeva, were rehabilitated on 24 December 1957.<sup>83</sup>

#### *Repression of Chinese in the Russian Far East*

As a vast region bordering China, thousands of miles away from Moscow and close to Japan, the Far Eastern Territory always had a special significance for the central Party and NKVD authorities. “Unable to manage Dalkrai and obsessed with the specter of conspiratorial separatism, Stalin and his associates ‘cleansed’ the Far East from above and from below.”<sup>84</sup> On 23 April 1937, *Pravda* published an article about espionage in the Soviet Far East,

explicitly mentioning the secret activities of Chinese and Korean nationals as Japanese agents.<sup>85</sup> The party elite was in a state of upheaval; frequent leadership changes, purges, suicides, and arrests were taking places between 1936 and 1938.<sup>86</sup> On 2 July 1937, Japanese and Manchurian forces sank an NKVD patrol boat on the Amur River. In this tense climate, Lyushkov was appointed NKVD chief in the Far East in July 1937, and under his reign, a repression campaign was launched through all layers of society, encompassing the Party and state organs as well.<sup>87</sup> This cleansing of the territory included the persecution and the expulsion of East Asians. The large-scale deportation of 171,781 Koreans from the RFE to central Asian Kazakhstan has been well-documented and shall not concern us any further at this point.<sup>88</sup> 19,000 out of the 24,589 Chinese living in the Far Eastern Territory in 1937 were arrested between 1936 and 1938.<sup>89</sup> 11,000 Chinese were arrested and 8,000 were deported alongside the Koreans.<sup>90</sup>

Recent publications of documents from the secret police archives give us a clearer picture about the orders and procedures concerning the persecution of Chinese nationals in the RFE. The deportations of Chinese started in December 1937 and lasted well into the summer of 1938. It started with a telegram which Ezhov, the head of the NKVD, sent to Lyushkov in Khabarovsk on 22 December 1937 with instructions to arrest all Chinese, independent of their citizenship, who engage in provocative activities or have terrorist intentions.<sup>91</sup> Only one day later, Ezhov sent another telegram, specifying orders. It read: “Simultaneously with the operation, liquidate all their favorite hiding places, Chinese and others. Conduct thorough searches. Arrest all those living in the hiding places [...] The affairs of Soviet citizens, who have been found guilty of anti-Soviet agitation, espionage, contrabandism, and active criminals as well, are to be examined by a troika and repressed – [assign] the appropriate sentence according to the first and second categories.<sup>92</sup> The affairs of foreign subjects in the group are to be transferred for review by a court, then expel them from the USSR. The affairs of the remainder are to be examined according to the judicial procedure. They are forbidden

residence in the Far Eastern Territory, Chitinskii, Irkutskii oblasts. Results of the operation [...] – report. Ezhov.”<sup>93</sup> On 5 March 1938, a politburo resolution followed concerning the eviction of Chinese from the RFE. It instructed the local authorities to accept in principal the suggestions of the Chinese embassy on the eviction of Chinese from the Far East to Xinjiang, Kazakhstan, and some districts in Western Siberia. Furthermore, it orders to entrust the NKVD with the implementation of this resolution (“possibly taking into account the wishes of the Chinese government and giving the eviction a voluntary character”).<sup>94</sup> Three months later, on 3 June 1938, Ezhov sent further instructions to Lyushkov. The subject is the deportation of Chinese from the Far East to Xinjiang. The memorandum reads: “First, send Chinese [nationals] who have neither Soviet nor Chinese passports, yet declare themselves to be Chinese citizens, to Xinjiang. Set up receipts of national passports by way of the Chinese consulate. Second, wives of Chinese citizens, who have Soviet citizenship, are to be sent to Xinjiang, together with their husbands. Compulsorily obtain a declaration of the relinquishment of Soviet citizenship. Third, evict Chinese women with Chinese citizenship, who are wives of Chinese with Soviet citizenship, together with their husbands to Kazakhstan. Fourth, administratively resettled people – wives of Chinese citizens – are not subject to the eviction.” The text continues with technical matters, registration and departure points of those who are to be deported, the appropriation of trains, and financial matters.<sup>95</sup> However, only a week later, there was a new Politburo resolution, with an order to discontinue the eviction of Chinese, unless the Chinese voluntarily want to move to Xinjiang. The resolution also orders the NKVD to refrain from further mass arrests of Chinese.<sup>96</sup> Based on this Politburo resolution, Ezhov sent a long telegram to Lyushkov, dated 11-13 June 1938, which starts with the following paragraph: “The chargé d'affaires of China asked the government of the USSR about the possibility for those Chinese who do not wish to go to Xinjiang, to remain in the Far Eastern Territory. The government of the USSR, considering the friendly relations with China and taking into account that no forceful eviction of Chinese has occurred, will meet halfway

the wishes of Chinese citizens living in the Far Eastern Territory.” The telegram instructs to discontinue the eviction of Chinese, only allowing those who wish to do so to resettle to Xinjiang, and to halt completely the resettlement of Chinese to Kazakhstan. The communiqué states further that the local authorities should provide comprehensive assistance to those Chinese who wish to go to Xinjiang, but should make them pay for the journey themselves. The telegram instructs that responsible people should be appointed and dispatched to the gathering points of those Chinese who are about to depart for Xinjiang or Kazakhstan. These people should “talk to the Chinese, explain to them the measures of the Soviet government, which were adopted based on the friendly relations with China, and obtain the exact number of families who wish to depart for Xinjiang, and the number of families who wish to stay in the Far East. Conduct similar work among those Chinese who are already on the trains. All this work should carry the character of a mass explanatory campaign.” The rest of the instructions include the resettlement of Chinese out of the border areas to other places within the Far Eastern Territory, compensation for those Chinese who had already sold their houses and farmsteads, and the discharge from prison and eviction to Xinjiang of those Chinese who were accused of or convicted for offenses other than espionage, active diversion, and terrorism. Further mass arrests were to be avoided.<sup>97</sup>

A closer look at the background and life situations of the Far Eastern Chinese victims becomes possible by examining the six-volume remembrance books for Khabarovsk,<sup>98</sup> the administrative center of the Far Eastern Territory during the 1930s. Of the more than 40,000 persecuted people listed in these volumes, 4,356 were Chinese. This number includes only people of Chinese ethnicity; it also includes all those whose cases have been closed due to insufficient evidence. Therefore, an analysis of the data from the Khabarovsk volumes is considerably more complex than the analysis of the Moscow data, which includes only Chinese who were executed. Although there are double entries (when Chinese appear under

different names, but with identical file numbers), this number of 4,356 Chinese is only a fraction of those arrested.

Out of the 4,356 Chinese in these volumes, only 287 were Soviet citizens, a percentage of 6.47. In a random sample of 970 cases, 198 (20.4%) were executed and 249 (25.7%) sent to camp. Apart from eight Chinese, who were deported (mostly during the 1920s), the remaining 523 arrested Chinese were freed. Most of those executed were shot in 1938. 192 of the 198 shot were convicted for espionage (§ 58-6). About a dozen of those convicted for espionage were also convicted for other offenses, such as terrorism (§58-8), sabotage (§58-9), anti-Soviet propaganda and agitation (§58-10) and membership in a counterrevolutionary organization (§58-11).<sup>99</sup> Of the 970 Chinese in the sample group, only 47 (less than 5%) had Soviet citizenship. The more than 900 others were either Chinese citizens or stateless. Of those 47 Soviet citizens, 13 were shot, 9 sent to camp, and 25 freed. Of the 198 Chinese in the sample group who were executed, 13 (~7%) had Soviet Citizenship, 81 (~41%) were Chinese citizens, and 105 (~52%) were stateless. This preliminary analysis demonstrates that the percentage of those with Soviet citizenship who were shot roughly corresponds to that of the percentage of Soviet citizens in the overall sample. This indicates that citizenship did not have much effect on the respective likelihood of a specific sentence. The 13 with Soviet citizenship who were shot did not have anything in common as far as their jobs or positions were concerned. Among them were two painters, two translators, two employees at the Chinese newspaper “Rabotchii Put” (*Worker’s Way*), a laundry man at the local hospital, a baker, a director at a fish-processing factory, and a soldier.

### *The Chinese, the Terror, and Citizenship*

As citizenship is an ever-present parameter in the data sets I have analyzed and in the NKVD orders, this section discusses the role of citizenship in the specific case of the Chinese in the Soviet Union during the Great Terror in the mid-1930s. Since the very beginning of

their migration to Russia, the Chinese rarely took Russian citizenship. Although the first citizenship laws from the 1860s stipulated that any foreigner could become a Russian citizen after five years of residence,<sup>100</sup> the Chinese rarely made use of this provision. There could be two reasons for this: first, the authorities' conviction that Chinese were incapable of assimilation, and second, that the Chinese often did not fulfill the formal requirements. Examples from Far Eastern archives inform us that 58 Chinese filed for citizenship between 1884 and 1898. Of those 58, only 13 were approved and actually became citizens of Russia. Between 1903 and 1907, only five Chinese received Russian citizenship.<sup>101</sup>

In October 1918, the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet granted citizenship to 128 Chinese who had applied for it.<sup>102</sup> Unlike the US government at the time, the new Soviet government encouraged foreign nationals to take Soviet citizenship. According to the 1924 Regulations on Soviet Citizenship, all foreigners living on Soviet territory who were members of the working class or peasants would receive the same political rights as Soviet citizens. Anyone unable to prove foreign citizenship was automatically considered a Soviet citizen. In order to prove foreign citizenship, foreigners had to present passports, which had either been issued abroad or by foreign agencies on Soviet territory with the right to issue passports.<sup>103</sup> It was easy to become a Soviet citizen; the old requirement of a minimum of five years of residence on Soviet territory was dropped by the new regime.<sup>104</sup> Stalin's first citizenship law in 1930 confirmed the regulations for becoming a Soviet citizen that were in place since 1921 and 1924 respectively. Foreign citizens who lived in the USSR could petition the Presidium of TsIK SSSR or the presidium of the central executive committee of the union republic in which they lived. The lower-level (*okrug*) central executive committees could also grant citizenship, but only in the case of foreign workers and peasants who were employed on Soviet territory and foreigners who had refugee status because of their revolutionary activities abroad.<sup>105</sup> The first of these two conditions applied to most of our Chinese labor migrants, yet apparently very few applied to become Soviet citizens. Although

this is not surprising in the light of their living conditions, illiteracy, and unfamiliarity with the law, it distinguishes the Chinese from other diaspora nationalities, “the vast majority of whom were Soviet citizens.”<sup>106</sup> The Koreans were much more likely to become Soviet citizens than the Chinese. Almost all Koreans living in the RFE took Soviet citizenship in 1925.<sup>107</sup> But the vast majority of Chinese did not do so. Most applications for Soviet citizenship were filed in 1926 and 1927,<sup>108</sup> but apparently Chinese either did not apply or could prove Chinese citizenship.

Apart from the above-mentioned interventions of the Chinese embassy on behalf of Chinese citizens during the time of the Terror, little is known about Chinese diplomatic representation in the USSR at the time. In the mid-1920s, there existed quite an extensive Chinese consular network across Soviet territory. We know of eleven consulates east of the Urals. After the breakup in Sino-Soviet relations in August 1929, the German consulates in Siberia (Novosibirsk) and the Far East (Vladivostok) were authorized by the Soviet government to represent the interests of Chinese citizens in the Soviet Union.<sup>109</sup> The German consuls could extend the passports of Chinese citizens and allow residence to the “working class categories,” as long as the secret police (OGPU) did not have compromising materials against them. This arrangement lasted until September 1930, when the Soviet government revoked it.<sup>110</sup> From 1933, when new regulations of the secret police (OGPU) stipulated that there had to be a thorough background check of applicants, it became increasingly difficult to become a Soviet citizen.<sup>111</sup> In 1934, China reopened a consulate in Novosibirsk, but its consular district was limited to the city of Novosibirsk.<sup>112</sup>

There are numerous conceptions of citizenship, countless variations pertaining to individual nation states,<sup>113</sup> and a highly normative contemporary discussion of the meaning of citizenship in a pluralistic democratic society.<sup>114</sup> One of the more useful conceptualizations of citizenship is offered by Stewart (1995). He distinguishes between state citizenship, which “involves the identification of citizenship with the elaboration of a formal legal status,” and

democratic citizenship, “which involves the elaboration of citizenship around shared membership of a political community.” Central to the concept of state citizenship is the notion of a general membership status that is abstract and formal.<sup>115</sup> In the state-centered concept of citizenship the emphasis is on status. This concept of citizenship appears to be the most useful for an analysis of the issue of citizenship in the Soviet Union of the 1920s and 1930s, where citizenship gradually became a fixed ascription, the same way as did class or nationality,<sup>116</sup> and in this process the concept of citizenship became increasingly separated from the rights which are typically associated with citizenship.<sup>117</sup> In fact, it was one distinguishing feature of Soviet citizenship practice that “the rights of citizenship could be divorced from citizenship itself; one could carry the title of citizen but lack all the rights and protections associated with it.”<sup>118</sup> The deprivation of citizenship rights was *de facto* tantamount to denaturalization, and citizenship policy was used as a means of sanction and discipline. Subjects of the Soviet penal system, however, always became citizens without the rights of citizenship. Although Soviet citizens retained that status, they lacked all rights and protections. *Soviet* citizenship was inconsequential in the circumstances of the Great Terror, both for Russians and for Chinese. However, the special orders and telegrams quoted above indicate that it was *Chinese* citizenship which mattered in some cases. Both the request from Ezhov to Stalin about freeing and deporting those Chinese citizens convicted for minor offenses,<sup>119</sup> as well as the suspension of the deportation of Chinese citizens from the Soviet Far East to Xinjiang<sup>120</sup> were based on requests from the Chinese embassy. The internal documents point to the importance of maintaining friendly relations with China and thus the readiness to accommodate requests from Chinese diplomats.

This article sought to highlight the experience of Chinese labor migrants in the Soviet Union during the Great Terror of the 1930s, and to fill some of the gaps in the scholarly literature on the Terror and nationality policy in the Soviet Union. It introduced a few characteristics of Chinese nationals in the Soviet Union, as well as recently published archival

documents and legislation pertaining to the Chinese during the Great Terror. It has been shown that the case of Chinese nationals differed in many ways from that of other persecuted nationalities. More than any other national minority in the Soviet Union did they epitomize the stereotype of the exploited coolie, both in late imperial Russia and during the early years of Bolshevik rule. Less numerous (especially in European Russia), largely illiterate, and an almost entirely male population, the Chinese figured only marginally in the Soviet nationalities policy of the 1920s and 1930s – a fact that is supported by their almost complete absence from the standard scholarly works on nationalities and the Terror. Yet despite the differences, they faced a similar fate as other nationalities during the terror and this was precisely due to the Soviet style of ethnic categorization, in which ethnic categories trumped other categories, such as citizenship, class, or gender.

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<sup>24</sup> A.G. Larin, *Kitaitsy V Rossii: Istoricheskii Otcherk* (Moscow: IDV RAN, 2000), 103-04.

<sup>25</sup> John J. Stephan, *The Russian Far East - A History* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1994), 213.

<sup>26</sup> Ju. N. Afanas'ev, Čubar'jan, A.O., Conquest, R., Danielson, E., Emmons, T., Gregory, P., Khlevniuk, O.V., Christoforov, V.S., Kozlov, V.A., Kozlov, V.P., Mironenko, S.V., Solženycyn, A.I., Sorokin, A.K., Jakovlev, A.N., ed., *Istoria Stalinskogo Gulaga - Konets 1920kh - Pervaia Polovina 1950kh Godov*, 7 vols. (Moskva: Rossppen, 2004 and 2005).

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, Lena Jin-Savva, *Iz Moskvy Da V Pekin - Vospominaniia* (Tenafly, N.J.: Hermitage Publishers, 2000).

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<sup>28</sup> I am grateful to Wladislaw Hedeler for providing me with this information. Hedeler has conducted many, as yet unpublished, interviews with GuLag survivors from the Kazakhstan Karaganda camps.

<sup>29</sup> Jörg Baberowski, *Der Feind ist überall. Stalinismus im Kaukasus* (München: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2003), pp. 185ff., Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire - Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001), 3f.

<sup>30</sup> Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations. Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2005), 5f.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 6. See also Baberowski, *Der Feind ist überall. Stalinismus im Kaukasus.*, pp. 189-193. For an analysis of the discussions among the Party elite on what to do with the nationality question, see Baberowski, *Der Feind ist überall. Stalinismus im Kaukasus.*, 197-214

<sup>32</sup> Hirsch, *Empire of Nations*, 8.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 274.

<sup>35</sup> See William J. Chase, *Enemies within the Gates? The Comintern and the Stalinist Repression, 1934-1939*, ed. Jonathan Brent, *The Annals of Communism Series* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), Ch. 2, 3, 4.

<sup>36</sup> Stephan, *The Russian Far East.*, 47

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 71

<sup>38</sup> Lewis H. Siegelbaum, "Another 'Yellow Peril': Chinese Migrants in the Russian Far East and the Russian Reaction before 1917," 313.

<sup>39</sup> Patsiorkovsky, "Asians in Small Business in the Russian Far East: A Historical Overview and Comparison with Asians on the American West Coast"

<sup>40</sup> Saveliev, "Chinese Migration to Russia in Space and Time," 40. Between 1907 and 1909, more than two million Russian settlers (were) moved to the RFE. In 1908, 120,000 Koreans and Chinese made up one-fourth of the population in the Maritim and Amur oblasts (see Siegelbaum, "Another 'Yellow Peril': Chinese Migrants in the Russian Far East and the Russian Reaction before 1917," 321).

<sup>41</sup> For the most comprehensive account of Chinese life in Russia during World War I, see Petrov, *Istoria Kitaitsev V Rossii*, 549-640. The transport of Chinese workers to war-time Europe, not just to Russia, but also to France and Great Britain, happened by way of the Transsiberian Railway which had been built, to a large part, by Chinese workers (Sen-Dou Chang, "The Distribution and Occupations of Overseas Chinese," *Geographical Review* 58, no. 1 (1968), 96).

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<sup>42</sup> Larin, "Chinese in Russia: A Historical Perspective," 287.

<sup>43</sup> N.A. Popov, "Kitaiskie Proletarii v Grazhdanskoi Voine v Rossii," in: *Kitaiskie Dobrovol'tsy v Boiakh Za Sovietskuiu Vlast' (1918-1922 gg.)*, ed. Yun-An' Liu (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Vostotchnoi Literatury, 1961), 7-10.

<sup>44</sup> Also in 1884, a Russian-Korean agreement led to a temporary halt of all Korean migration to Russian territory. See Siegelbaum, "Another 'Yellow Peril': Chinese Migrants in the Russian Far East and the Russian Reaction before 1917," 311.

<sup>45</sup> Siegelbaum, "Another 'Yellow Peril': Chinese Migrants in the Russian Far East and the Russian Reaction before 1917," 317; Arsen'ev, "Kitaitsy v Ussuriiskom Krae," p. 93. Arsen'ev was an employee of the Amur department of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society and lived in the Ussuri region from 1906-1912. His account, written during these years, is especially revealing of the contemporary Russian attitudes towards Chinese and Chinese settlement in the RFE. He also writes that Russian peasant settlers knew almost nothing about the area and took a long time to adapt to the local conditions despite of the assistance they received from authorities (ibid., 92)

<sup>46</sup> Siegelbaum, "Another 'Yellow Peril': Chinese Migrants in the Russian Far East and the Russian Reaction before 1917," 318.

<sup>47</sup> Petrov, *Istoria Kitaitsev V Rossii.*, pp. 330ff.

<sup>48</sup> Siegelbaum, "Another 'Yellow Peril': Chinese Migrants in the Russian Far East and the Russian Reaction before 1917," 322.

<sup>49</sup> Alexander G. Larin, "Chinese in Russia: A Historical Perspective," 284f., based on GARF, 130/3/174, F. 51.

<sup>50</sup> N.A. Popov, "Kitaiskie Proletarii v Grazhdanskoi Voine V Rossii," in: *Kitaiskie Dobrovol'tsy v Boiakh za Sovietskuiu Vlast' (1918-1922 gg.)*, ed. Yun-An' Liu (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Vostotchnoi Literatury, 1961), 30

<sup>51</sup> For more information on the affairs of the Moscow Chinese population, see GARF, F. 1235, Op. 123, d. 35.

<sup>52</sup> The Chinese are not mentioned, for example, in the campaign to establish a theatre for the national minorities in Moscow in 1928 (see GARF, F. 1235, Op.123, d. 45)

<sup>53</sup> For details, see GARF, F. 1235, Op. 123, d. 111.

<sup>54</sup> Lukin, *The Bear Watches the Dragon - Russia's Perceptions of China and the Evolution of Russian-Chinese Relations since the Eighteenth Century*, 102-03

<sup>55</sup> N.L. Pobol', Polian, P.M., ed., *Stalinskie Deportatsii 1928-1953, Rossiia XX Vek - Dokumenty*, 34

<sup>56</sup> Lena Jin-Savva, *Iz Moskvy Da V Pekin - Vospominaniia* (Tenafly, N.J.: Hermitage Publishers, 2000), 150-52.

<sup>57</sup> Terry Martin, "The Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing," *The Journal of Modern History* 70 (1998), 832.

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 840.

<sup>59</sup> Larisa Belkowez, Sergej Belkowez, *Gescheiterte Hoffnungen - Das Deutsche Generalkonsulat in Sibirien 1923-1938*, ed. Bernd Bonwetsch (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2004), 94-95. The information that many Chinese lived on Soviet territory only temporarily comes from a letter from the German Consul in Novosibirsk to the German Foreign Ministry in Berlin on November 8, 1936 (based on: Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes Bonn-Berlin).

<sup>60</sup> Rolf Binner, Marc Junge, Terry Martin, "The Great Terror in the Provinces of the USSR, 1937-1938 - A Cooperative Bibliography," *Cahiers du Monde Russe* 42 (2001).

<sup>61</sup> Martin, "Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing," 855f.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 160

<sup>63</sup> TsKhSD, F. Op. (Komissia Shvernika), d. 4, l. 7

<sup>64</sup> from Marc Junge, based on document from APRF, F.3, Op. 58, d. 6, l. 52

<sup>65</sup> Martin calls the Kharbinsy both "primarily ethnic Russians" and "ethnic Russians," see Martin, "Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing," 860

<sup>66</sup> No. 00593 is the Kharbinsy Order. See Binner, "The Great Terror in the Provinces of the USSR, 1937-1938 - A Cooperative Bibliography."

<sup>67</sup> V.N. Khaustov, Naumov, V.P., Plotnikova, N.S., ed., *Liubianka - Stalin I Glavnoe Upravlenie Gosbezopasnosti NKVD 1937-1938 / Dokumenty*, 503 (document: APRF F. 3, Op. 58, d. 254, ll. 200-205)

<sup>68</sup> Mozokhin, *Pravo Na Repressii*, pp. 169-170. In Sverdlovsk oblast, 1249 people were arrested based on the Kharbinsy Order. Out of these, only 49 people were actually Kharbinsy (ibid.).

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 191; Khaustov, ed., *Liubianka - Stalin I Glavnoe Upravlenie Gosbezopasnosti NKVD*, 607-11

<sup>70</sup> Khaustov, ed., *Liubianka - Stalin I Glavnoe Upravlenie Gosbezopasnosti NKVD*, 602-603 (based on document: APRF, F.3, Op.58, d. 139, ll. 110-11)

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 603 (based on document: APRF, F. 3, Op. 58, d. 139, l. 109)

<sup>72</sup> Memorial, *Kommunarka, Butovo - Rasstreliannye Spiski, Moskva 1937-1941* (Moscow: Zven'ia, 2000).

<sup>73</sup> Memorial, *Butovski Poligon 1937-1938, Kniga Pamiati Zhertv Politicheskikh Repressii* (Moscow: Zven'ia, 2003). For information on the history of Butovskii Poligon, see *Butovskii Poligon V Rodnom Kraio - Dokumenty, Svidetel'stva, Sud'by*, (Moscow: Postoiannaia mezhvedomstvennaia komissia pravitelstva Moskvy po vosstanovleniiu prav reabilitirovannykh zhertv politicheskikh repressii, 2004).

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<sup>74</sup> Khaustov, ed., *Liubianka - Stalin I Glavnoe Upravlenie Gosbezopasnosti NKVD*, 160 (document: APRF F. 3, Op. 24, d. 303, l. 1-2)

<sup>75</sup> Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 255

<sup>76</sup> Adam McKeown, "Conceptualizing Chinese Diasporas, 1842 to 1949," 316.

<sup>77</sup> B.P. Trenin, ed., *1937-1938gg. Operatsii NKVD - Iz Khronoki "Bolshogo Terrora" Na Tomskoi Zemle*.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 203-04 (document: UFSB Tomskoi Oblasti, D. P-2528, l. 2)

<sup>79</sup> Obviously this is a mistake. The Chinese Communist Party was only founded in 1921, a fact of which the NKVD interrogators and transcript writers were certainly unaware. See Ibid., 217

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 219-20, translation by the author.

<sup>81</sup> The conviction states a higher education (Trenin, 2006, 225) while the rehabilitation document says he had a middle school education (Trenin, 2006, 389)

<sup>82</sup> All background information is from the rehabilitation document of 24 December 1957 (Trenin, 2006, 389-92 [Arkhiv UFSB Tomskoi oblasti. D. P-2518, l. 90-96. Original. Machine-written] ).

<sup>83</sup> Ibid. (Trenin, 2006, 389-392).

<sup>84</sup> John J. Stephan, *The Russian Far East*, 209

<sup>85</sup> A.G. Larin, *Kitaitsy V Rossii: Istoritcheskii Otcherk* (Moscow: IDV RAN, 2000), 103

<sup>86</sup> For details, see Stephan, *The Russian Far East*, 210

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 211-12

<sup>88</sup> N.F. Bugai, "Koreiskii Vopros" Na Dal'nem Vostoke I Deportatsiia 1937 Goda," *Problemy Dal'nego Vostoka*, no. 4 (1992).; Martin, "Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing," 851

<sup>89</sup> Stephan, *The Russian Far East*, 213

<sup>90</sup> Bugai, "Koreiskii Vopros" Na Dal'nem Vostoke I Deportatsiia 1937 Goda," 159. It is unclear on which source this data is based.

<sup>91</sup> Pobol', ed., *Stalinskie Deportatsii 1928-1953*, 101 (document: TsA FSB, F. 3, Op.4, d. 152, l. 227)

<sup>92</sup> First category meant execution, second category meant camp. See section on Great Terror above.

<sup>93</sup> Pobol', ed., *Stalinskie Deportatsii 1928-1953*, 102 (document: TsA FSB F.3, Op. 4, d. 10, l. 232)

<sup>94</sup> Khaustov, ed., *Liubianka - Stalin I Glavnoe Upravlenie Gosbezopasnosti NKVD*, 498 (document: APRF, F. 3, Op. 58, d. 139, l. 101)

<sup>95</sup> Pobol', ed., *Stalinskie Deportatsii 1928-1953*, 102-03 (document: TsA FSB, F. 3, Op. 5, d. 60, l. 62)

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<sup>96</sup> Khaustov, ed., *Liubianka - Stalin I Glavnoe Upravlenie Gosbezopasnosti NKVD.*, 540 (document: APRF F.3, Op. 58, d. 139, ll. 106-07)

<sup>97</sup> Pobol', ed., *Stalinskie Deportatsii 1928-1953*, 103-04 (document: TsA FSB, F.3, Op. 5, d. 87, ll. 206-10)

<sup>98</sup> Memorial, *Khotelos' by Vsekh Poimennu Nazvat'*, *Kniga-Martirolog*, 6 vols. (Khabarovsk: Memorial Khabarovsk, 2004).

<sup>99</sup> *Ugolovny Kodeks R.S.F.S.R. (S Izmeneniami Do 1 Sentyabria 1928 Goda)*, 34-41

<sup>100</sup> Igor R. Saveliev, "Chinese Migration to Russia in Space and Time," 46-47

<sup>101</sup> T.Z. Pozniak, *Inostrannye Poddannye V Gorodakh Dal'nego Vostoka Rossii (Vtoraia Polovina XIX - Natchalo XX V.)* (Vladivostok: Dal'nauka, 2004), 214

<sup>102</sup> Popov, "Kitaiskie Proletarii v Grazhdanskoi Voine v Rossii," 10-11 (document Archive of the October Revolution and socialist construction of the Leningrad Oblast, F. 52, Op.2, d. 182, l. 31)

<sup>103</sup> Belkowez, *Gescheiterte Hoffnungen*, 48. German consulates received these rights in October 1925. It is unknown when or whether Chinese consulates had similar rights.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 49

<sup>105</sup> Golfo Alexopoulos, "Soviet Citizenship, More or Less - Rights, Emotions, and States of Civic Belonging," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 7, no. 3 (2006), 511

<sup>106</sup> Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 338

<sup>107</sup> Patsiorkovsky, "Asians in Small Business in the Russian Far East: A Historical Overview and Comparison with Asians on the American West Coast," 569-570.

<sup>108</sup> Belkowez, *Gescheiterte Hoffnungen*, 50, based on RGANO (State Archive of the Novosibirsk Oblast) F. R-47, Op. 5, d. 20.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 95, based on: AVR RF (Arkhiv vnesheini politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii), F. 82, Op. 13, folder 52, d. 34, l. 73.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 95

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 50

<sup>112</sup> In the 1920s, the Chinese consulate in Novosibirsk had been responsible for all of Western Siberia, Krasnoiarsk, and the Omsk area. Ibid., 95f.

<sup>113</sup> Angus Stewart, "Two Conceptions of Citizenship," *The British Journal of Sociology* 46, no. 1 (1995).

<sup>114</sup> Garofalo, Charles/ Geuras, Dean, *Common Ground, Common Future - Moral Agency in Public Administration, Professions, and Citizenship* (Boca Raton/ London: Taylor & Francis, 2006).

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<sup>115</sup> Angus Stewart, "Two Conceptions of Citizenship," 65.

<sup>116</sup> See, for example, Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Ascribing Class: The Construction of Social Identity in Soviet Russia," *Journal of Modern History* 65 (1993).; Terry Martin, "Modernization or Neo-Traditionalism: Ascribed Nationality and Soviet Primordialism," in *Stalinism: New Approaches*, ed. Sheila Fitzpatrick (New York: 1999).

<sup>117</sup> Alexopoulos, "Soviet Citizenship, More or Less," 508

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 489

<sup>119</sup> Khaustov, ed., *Liubianka - Stalin I Glavnoe Upravlenie Gosbezopasnosti NKVD.*, 602-03 (document: APRF F. 3, Op. 58, d. 139, ll. 110-11)

<sup>120</sup> Pobol', ed., *Stalinskie Deportatsii 1928-1953.*, 103-104 (document: TsA FSB, F.3, Op. 5, d. 87, ll. 206-10)

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## Rights and Sovereignties in Global History

**Friday, March 16**

**Registration (3:00 P.m. to 3:45 p.m.)**  
Center for European Studies Foyer

**Opening Remarks (3:50 P.m. to 4:00 p.m.)**  
**Daniel Sargent (Harvard University)**

**Session 1: Science, Technology, and Sovereignty (4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.)**

**Chair: Rachel St. John (Harvard University)**

**Laura Biron (University of Cambridge, United Kingdom)**  
*The 'Justice' of TRIPS: The Expansion of Intellectual Property in the Global Trading System*  
Commentary: Talha Syed (Harvard University)

**Sandhya Polu (Harvard University)**  
*National Sovereignty versus Epidemic Disease Control in the 19th Century*  
Commentary: Maneesha Lal (Binghamton University)

**Jenifer Van Vleck (Yale University)**  
*The Logic of the Air: Visions of Aviation and Empire, 1938-1945*  
Commentary: Bruce Mazlish (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)

**Reception and Dinner (6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.)**  
Harvard Faculty Club

(By invitation only)

**Keynote Address: Walter Johnson (Harvard University)**

**Saturday, March 17**

**Continental Breakfast (8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.)**  
Center for European Studies Foyer

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Session 2: Sovereignty and Intervention (8:30 p.m. to 10:30 a.m.)

Chair: David Armitage (Harvard University)

Sana Aiyar (Harvard University)

*Human Rights and Diaspora: International Means to National Justice*

Commentary: Ajantha Subramanian (Harvard University)

James Stocker (Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva, Switzerland)

*A Right to Humanitarian Intervention? The Syrian Intervention in Lebanon, 1975-6*

Commentary: Daniel Sargent (Harvard University)

Vanessa Walker (University of Wisconsin - Madison)

*Moral Necessities and Ideological Diversity: Rethinking Sovereignty in U.S.-Latin American Relations in a Human Rights Era*

Commentary: Elizabeth Borgwardt (Washington University in St. Louis)

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Coffee Break (10:30 a.m. to 10:45 p.m.)

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Session 3: Citizenship and Statehood (10:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.)

Chair: Sven Beckert (Harvard University)

Karin-Irene Eiermann (Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany)

*Spies in the Laundry: Citizenship, Rights, and the Fate of the Chinese in the Stalinist Terror (1936-1938)*

Commentary: Terry Martin (Harvard University)

Ryan Irwin (Ohio State University)

*Apartheid in the Cold War Era: A Transnational Perspective*

Commentary: Thomas Borstelmann (University of Nebraska - Lincoln)

Nicole Phelps (University of Minnesota - Twin Cities)

*International Migration, Citizenship, and Sovereignty: The United States Bureau of Immigration and the Erosion of Austro-Hungarian Legitimacy, 1900-1920*

Commentary: Alison Frank (Harvard University)

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Lunch (12:45 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.)

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Session 4: Negotiating with Hegemony (1:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.)

Chair: Ernest May (Harvard University)

Patryk Babiracki (Johns Hopkins University)

*Polish Students, Communist Bureaucrats, and the Other Side of the Soviet Empire's Engagement with Poland, 1945-1960*

Commentary: Igor Lukes (Boston University)

**Jennifer Miller (University of Wisconsin - Madison)**

*We are not in Japan as Conquerors": Japanese Sovereignty, American Military Bases and the U.S.-Japan Alliance in the 1950s*

Commentary: Andrew Gordon (Harvard University)

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Coffee Break (3:15 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.)

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Plenary Session (3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.)

Chair: Hue Tam Ho Tai (Harvard University)

Elizabeth Borgwardt (Washington University, St. Louis)

Bruce Mazlish (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)

Tim Borstelmann (University of Nebraska - Lincoln)

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Closing Remarks (5:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.)

Akira Iriye (Harvard University)

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Farewell Reception (6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.)

Hosted by Professor and Mrs. Akira Iriye

(By invitation only)

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